

Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1959

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276 ¶ Remarks at the Cornerstone-Laying
Ceremony for the Central Intelligence Agency
Building, Langley, Virginia. November 3, 1959

*Mr. Dulles, Secretary McElroy, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Central
Intelligence Agency:*

America's fundamental aspiration is the preservation of peace. To this end we seek to develop policies and arrangements to make the peace both permanent and just. This can be done only on the basis of comprehensive and appropriate information.

In war nothing is more important to a commander than the facts concerning the strength, dispositions, and intentions of his opponent, and the proper interpretation of those facts. In peacetime the necessary facts are of a different nature. They deal with conditions, resources, requirements, and attitudes prevailing in the world. They and their correct interpretation are essential to the development of policy to further our long term national security and best interests. To provide information of this kind is the task of the organization of which you are a part.

No task could be more important.

Upon the quality of your work depends in large measure the success of our effort to further the Nation's position in the international scene.

By its very nature the work of this agency demands of its members the highest order of dedication, ability, trustworthiness, and selflessness — to say nothing of the finest type of courage, whenever needed. Success cannot be advertised; failure cannot be explained. In the work of Intelligence, heroes are undecorated and unsung, often even among their own fraternity. Their inspiration is rooted in patriotism—their reward can be little except the conviction that they are performing a unique and indispensable service for their country, and the knowledge that America needs and appreciates their efforts. I assure you this is indeed true.

The reputation of your organization for quality and excellence of performance, under the leadership of your Director, Mr. Allen Dulles, is a proud one.

Because I deeply believe these things, I deem it a great privilege to participate in this ceremony of cornerstone laying for the national headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency. On this spot will rise a

beautiful and a useful structure. May it long endure, to serve the cause of America and of peace.

Thank you.

277. ¶ The President's News Conference of November 4, 1959.

THE PRESIDENT. In order to confirm some of the things that you have been reading in the papers, I want to give you an announcement, which may be of some interest.

I am planning to leave Washington on December 4th on a 2½ weeks' trip which will take me to nine countries.

In response to friendly invitations from the heads of state concerned, I plan to make brief informal visits to Rome, where I hope also to call on His Holiness the Pope, to Ankara, Karachi, Kabul, and to be in New Delhi for the inauguration of the American Exhibit at the World Agricultural Fair which opens on December 11th.

From India, I plan to visit Tehran and Athens en route to Paris to the Western summit meeting scheduled for December 19th. On my way home from Paris, I shall stop briefly in Rabat.

When the detailed schedule of this trip is fixed in consultation with the several governments concerned, I shall, of course, make it known to you.

There are three critical dates. December 3d, I think, or 4th is the very earliest date I could possibly go because there is all of the great work of developing the legislative program and the budget for the coming year.

December 11 is critical because that is the day when the Agricultural Fair will open.

December 19 is a critical one because that is the day I am to be in Paris. So this doesn't leave a great deal of time for dallying along the way.

That is all I have to say.¹

¹ On November 5 the White House released a statement concerning the composition of the party to accompany the President on his trip. Noting that Secretary Herter would be unable to go because of duties connected with the NATO Ministerial Council Meeting in Paris on December 15, the statement announced that the ranking State Department representative would be Robert Murphy, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Other members of the party would include White House administrative Staff assistants and confidential secretaries.